

III. Amendments to the Specification

Please amend Paragraph [0010] as follows:

[0010] The accompanying drawings illustrate preferred embodiments of the invention, as well as other information pertinent to the disclosure, in which:

FIG. 1A is a top plan view of a one-piece post cladding element;

FIG. 1B is a top plan view of the cladding element as extruded;

FIG. 1C is a top plan view of the cladding element of FIG. 1A shown flexed to open a seam closure therein;

FIG. 2 is a partial perspective view of the cladding element of FIGS. 1A and 1C shown coupled to a post;

FIG. 3A is a partial view of an embodiment of male-female connectors including barbs;

FIG. 3B is a partial view of an embodiment of male-female connectors including a latch;

FIG. 4 is a partial perspective view of the cladding assembly of FIG. 2 having a decorative molding element attached thereto;

FIG. 5 is a partial perspective view showing a cladding element secured to a post.

Please amend Paragraph [0016] as follows:

[0016] As mentioned, FIG. 2 illustrates a cladding element 10 disposed around a post 20. The connectors 16 are mated to secure the element 10 and close seam closure 14. The seam closure is not visible on the outer surface of the cladding element 10 because it camouflaged into or is covered by the ornamental configuration of the outer surface. For additional support,

fasteners such as screws or nails 50, as shown in FIG. 5, ~~(not shown)~~ can be driven through the interior leg of the female connector into the post 20. These fasteners are then covered when the male connector is mated with the female connector. Male-female connection pair 16 may also be provided with latches (illustrated by latches 21 of male-female pair 16b of FIG. 3B) or barbs (illustrated by barbs 19 of male-female pair 16a of FIG. 3A) to further reinforce or secure the connection.